

Astris TeamWare feature list

A BRIEF GUIDE TO ASTRIS FACILITIES

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Introduction

Email systems, such as Microsoft Outlook, are designed as a tool for an individual, not a business or a group of people within an organization who share a joint function or common goal.

Outlook's individual-centric approach often forces users to create workarounds to keep everyone informed of their actions or to gain information on the actions of others. Many automatic Cc's typically do this, accompanied by secondary informational emails ("Done", "Let's not reply", etc.) to keep all group members up to date. One can easily imagine how much additional traffic, in the form of secondary, tertiary, and further emails, this can generate. Such additional traffic tends to grow exponentially with the volume of action-requiring e-mails in an organization, forcing the IT department to find solutions to a more complex problem than is apparent.

Astris TeamWare Suite includes add-ons that turn the Outlook/Exchange ecosystem into a group e-mail platform.

Office 365

Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud solution, moving away from the traditional software sales model and into the modern "Software as a Service" commercial policy. Several large businesses have already joined Office 365 (O365) for email services.

O365 can service standard Outlook users using Outlook for PC and users without Outlook on their PC who access their emails through a web browser using Outlook Web Access (OWA) or the Modern Outlook, which is essentially OWA in a box.

Astris offers some unique features to Outlook users. Most are already available for OWA users, and some will become available soon. The future of a few others is unclear, as it depends on Microsoft's (secretive) plans for making OWA more extensible.

Astris comes in two basic forms of configuration:

Level 1 is the most basic form and offers approximately 90% of Astris' functionality. It is easy to set up and requires only a single dedicated application server.

Level 2 offers all functionality, requires additional server resources and requires a more complex setup to operate.

A summary of Astris features available per configuration Level (L1/L2) and user device type is shown in the next chapter.

Astris list of features

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Outlook Client</i>	<i>OWA</i>	<i>iOS & Android phones</i>
1. <i>Replied By</i>	L1 Info Group	Shows any user(s) who have already replied to a particular email.	✓	✓	-
2. <i>Sent By</i>	L1 Info Group	Shows who the sender of an email is when it is sent by a departmental address.	✓	✓	-
3. <i>Change Sender</i>	L1 Group	Changes the sender email address for new emails to the user's departmental address. This can be overridden by user action.	✓	-	-
4. <i>Address Rewriting</i>	L2 Group	Changes the sender's email address to the user's departmental address based on company policy (usually only for messages to 3 rd parties or vessels). The user cannot override it.	✓	✓	✓
5. <i>Reference Numbers</i>	L2 Group	Each message carries a unique ID on its Subject, which is applied automatically. Allows the users to reference a message in documentation or discussions easily.	✓	✓	✓
6. <i>Email Delivery folders</i>	L1 Fclt Perf	Email traffic is spread in three (or more) folders instead of just the Inbox, which offers several benefits to the users and Outlook itself. Folders such as "My Department", "Other Departments", "My Fleet", and "Other Fleets" exist beneath the standard Inbox folder. NOTE: L2 configuration will also respect Bcc recipients when segregating email traffic.	✓	✓	✓
7. <i>MessageSafe Archiving</i>	L1 Group Perf Cmpl	An instant email archiving mechanism automatically files all email traffic into corporate "vaults". Messages are never deleted from MessageSafe (exceptions exist for GDPR) and can be used for Records Management purposes. Messages are continuously updated with user actions such as tagging, replying and reading.	✓	✓	✓

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Outlook Client</i>	<i>OWA</i>	<i>iOS & Android phones</i>
8. <i>MessageSafe Search</i>	L1 Group Perf Cmpl	<p>A robust search integrated into Outlook, and also available as a standalone web app, enables users to find the messages they need reliably.</p> <p>A unique permissions-mapping mechanism ensures that users can access both historical and current departmental messages, regardless of whether they have ever received them in their mailboxes.</p>	✓	F ¹	✓
9. <i>Quick Keywords Search</i>	L1 Group Perf Cmpl	<p>Quick searching of emails using predefined keywords.</p> <p>Search can operate on either the local Outlook mailbox or on MessageSafe.</p>	✓		
10. <i>GDPR Support</i>	L1 Cmpl	<p>Users can assign messages to multiple PII classes in accordance with corporate GDPR policy.</p> <p>Astris combines PII classes with Retention Policies on Exchange, so such messages will be deleted from user mailboxes on time (it is enough that one user classifies the message as PII to have it removed from all mailboxes).</p> <p>PII messages held in MessageSafe are subject to a two-stage delete scheme. First, at the expiration of the Retention Period, the message is hidden from all users. Second, a manual review process is provisioned to the DPO, who will decide the final hard deletion of eligible messages.</p>	✓	✓	N ¹
11. <i>Message Destroy</i>	L1 Group	<p>Properly authorized users have a “Delete from All” facility to delete a message even when it has already been delivered to other users’ mailboxes.</p> <p>Specific users can be granted “immunity” from Destroy operations.</p>	✓	F	-

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Outlook Client</i>	<i>OWA</i>	<i>iOS & Android phones</i>
12. Action audit	L1 Cmpl	Two classes of audit details exist. Short-term audit details when users send, read, reply, tag, and file a message. Permanent audit details who sent, read, replied, and filed a message and all MessageSafe activities, including search, preview, and download. Audit details are only available to administrators through a special console.	✓	✓	✓
13. Auto-Classify	L1 Group	Messages are classified with Project/Ship, Company, Division, Department, using Outlook Colour Categories and more. Classification is centrally controlled (no Outlook rules are involved). Users use it to quickly distinguish among messages.	✓	✓	N ¹
14. Manual Classify	L1 Group	A “Keywords Bar” enables users to effortlessly tag messages with keywords of their choice. Outlook Colour Categories are used to display the keywords picked by the user. Once a user tags a message, the assigned keywords become visible to all users with the same message in their mailboxes. Tags are also helpful in searching both in local mailboxes and inside MessageSafe.	✓	✓	N ¹
15. Message jotting	L1 Group	A “sticky note” feature allows users to add short notes to any email message. For example, a manager may add work notes, and a team member may add notes on how he carried out the instructions.	✓	✓	-
16. Email Templates	L1 Group Fclt	Users can save frequently used emails as standard templates that can be quickly reused by themselves or their entire team. Granular security controls and full audit safeguards ensure the appropriate use of this feature.	✓	-	-

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17. Well-known names for incoming messages	L2 Group Info	The From field of incoming messages can be automatically adjusted to display a well-known friendly name rather than the "Display Name" chosen by the individual sending the email.	✓	✓	✓
18. Work on Shared Mailboxes	L1 Group	Shared mailboxes are an alternative that can be used to collect departmental emails, thereby reducing traffic to personal mailboxes. Several features enable users to utilize shared mailboxes as standard personal mailboxes, which is not possible in the default Microsoft setup.	✓	N ³	N ³
19. Group Filing	L1 Fclt Group	Offers a corporate Library with several shared folders for users where they can file emails with simple drag-and-drop and documents of any type. Permissions control access to Library folders, and all operations are fully audited.	✓		
20. Personal Filing	L1 Fclt Group	Offers a folder-sync feature that allows users to organize their mailbox using standard Outlook folders to create custom folder structures. These folder structures are then automatically mirrored in a personal Library in Astris. The folders in Outlook may be relieved of older messages through Retention Policies or other means, while their replicas in Astris retain all messages, old and new, indefinitely. Additional safety features prevent accidental deletion or modification of emails in the replica folders, guarding against notorious "account takeover" ransomware or other mishaps.	✓	✓	✓
21. Library Browsing and Searching	L1 Fclt Group	Provides access to the corporate Library for browsing folders and emails or for searching directly for them. All operations are under the access control and auditing mechanisms.	✓		✓
22. Filed By	L1 Info Group	Shows who has already filed a message, when and in which Library folder.	✓	✓	-

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Outlook Client</i>	<i>OWA</i>	<i>iOS & Android phones</i>
23. Mass Export	L1 Fclt	Provides a “shopping cart” facility where users can arbitrarily deposit emails, documents, or entire folder trees. Anything in the “cart” can then be exported in ZIP or PST formats with folder structures accurately preserved. This facilitates the work of auditors or staff traveling in places without connectivity.	✓	✓	-

CLASS LEGEND

Info: Feature that provides additional information to the users

Group: Groupware feature, in other words, an element facilitating close collaboration of users in departments or groups.

Perf: A feature enhancing the performance of Outlook for users receiving more than a few hundred emails daily.

Fcft: A feature facilitating the everyday work of the user.

Cmpl: A feature helping compliance with Records Management/SOX/GDPR.

FEATURE AVAILABILITY LEGEND

✓ : Feature is available.

F: The feature will be available in a future release.

F¹: The feature will be available soon. MessageSafe Search is also available as a standalone web application that can be executed with any web browser. After reading an email with the built-in preview pane, a user may download it fully. In this case, an Outlook client is required to open a message and further work on it.

N¹: Requires the advanced email client Nine® or OfficeMail Pro from 9Folders Inc.

N³: Users can read emails in shared mailboxes and reply to them but need help distinguishing unread messages. The default Outlook behaviour is to mark a message as read for all users of a shared mailbox with a single read operation. This is taken care of in standard Outlook through the Astris add-ins.

Summary

Astris TeamWare offers a rich set of features to enhance the everyday experience of Outlook users working in mail-intensive and collaborative environments.

The list presented above is not exhaustive; many more features exist that facilitate adaptation to many different business environments.

For more information, please get in touch with MetaDocs Ltd at info@metadocs.eu or visit our site, www.metadocs.eu